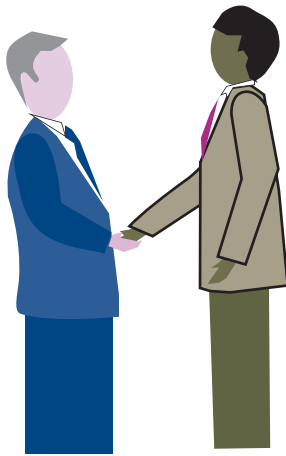




CDSS

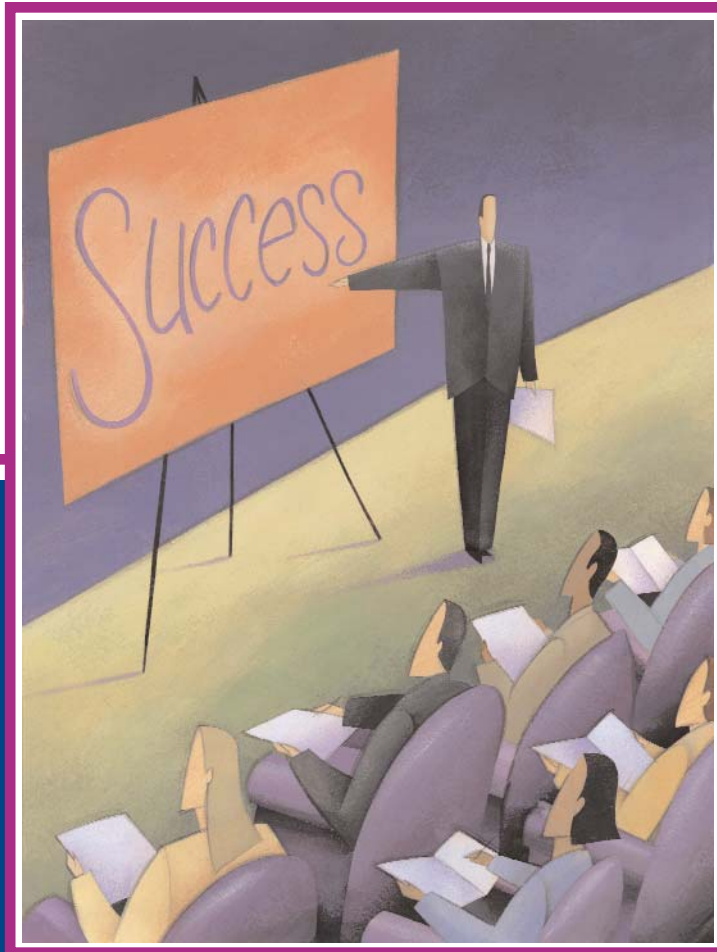
CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICES



MENTORING PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Introduction

to the Program for Candidates



What is the purpose of a Mentoring Program?

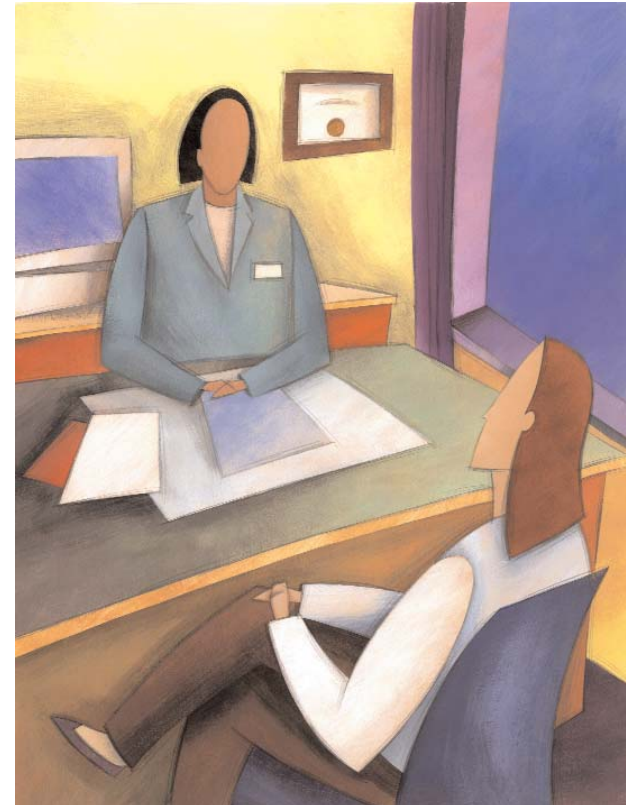
The Mentoring Partnership Program is intended to partner current CDSS managers with experienced and respected current and former State managers that will provide a relationship for current managers to improve leadership skills, explore new management approaches and styles and increase their confidence in approaching challenges on the job. The mentoring partnerships will last from six to nine months with the partners expected to meet two to four times a month to explore the challenges of managing in CDSS.

Employees participating in the Program are expected to make a commitment to the Program by allotting necessary time to develop a relationship with the mentor, candidly discuss job challenges, perceived developmental needs and balancing work with personal life issues. The information will remain confidential between the mentor and employee. The idea is that employees will have a safe place to explore developmental needs with an individual who has experienced the challenges of management and leadership. Also, a mentor partnership often provides the mentee with information valuable for career planning. The CDSS Executive Staff has endorsed this Program and has agreed to provide support for mentors and Program participants. Policy guidance will be provided to the Program through an oversight committee comprised of the Department's Executive Staff.

The Program is not highly structured and is not intended to be a substitute for any formal skill building training or to interfere with the employee's relationship with his or her supervisor.

How can an employee benefit from a Mentoring Program?

Current CDSS managers are being offered the opportunity to participate in the Mentoring Partnership Program as another avenue to improve leadership skills and improve as a manager and leader. The Department is offering the time for Program participation and access to a wealth of management knowledge and experience through this Program. With a small investment of time to explore his or her own developmental needs and an investment of time to develop a productive relationship with a mentor, the employee will gain skills, knowledge and confidence to become a better manager and leader. The length of the Program will also allow for the candidates to “test drive” some new skills, approaches and styles and have feedback sessions with the mentor. Mentors and mentees will also meet as a group to discuss common issues and successful approaches to being a good leader and manager.



What responsibilities will I have in the Program?

1. Identify your own developmental needs and discuss with your mentor: As part of the application process for the Program, each candidate will be required to complete a short self-assessment of developmental needs. This assessment will serve two purposes. First, the Program will attempt to match mentors with mentees based upon the developmental needs identified by the mentee and the experience of the mentor. By attempting this match, it is likely the Program will be of greater value to each mentee. Second, by performing this self-assessment, there is a common point for the mentor-mentee relationship to start. The mentor will be able to focus on certain past experiences that will be of value to the mentee. This document will only be a starting point based upon the mentees' perceived needs. In many partnerships, new and additional goals will be discussed over time.
2. Allot time each month to meet with your mentor and for occasional group meetings. The Program will require that each partnership meet together a minimum of twice a month. These meetings will be from two to four hours and can occur in a variety of ways: formal meetings in the office; meetings over breakfast, lunch or a cup of coffee, and other informal arrangements that are made. The Program encourages both the mentor and mentee to establish meetings on a routine basis and make the time so the meetings occur. The meetings can be part of your established work schedule.

The Program will also convene group meetings of all mentors and mentees at least quarterly to discuss common issues that mentors will identify. These meetings may be discussions, presentations by experienced managers or even formal training lasting no more than a half day. These meetings will also be important to attend to receive the full value of the Program.



3. Develop a relationship with your mentor. The most important element of the Program is for each partnership team to develop a productive relationship in which the mentee and mentor can discuss the challenges and issues that each mentee is facing in becoming a successful manager and leader. These discussions are confidential and the specifics will not be shared with other individuals including the mentee's supervisor. This will provide a safe environment for discussion of issues and a better likelihood that the partnership can identify the real developmental needs of the mentee. This relationship can be developed only if the mentee is willing to discuss both successes and perceived developmental needs in a frank way with the mentor.
4. Work on knowledge and practice skills. Each mentee will be expected to gather new knowledge from the mentor or from the partnership group meetings. The Program will point each individual mentee in a direction to seek new knowledge. It is important that the mentees work on acquiring the knowledge, skills and approaches and test them during the partnership period. The success or shortcoming can then be discussed with the mentor. The examination of the experiences through discussion with the mentor will validate the new efforts or will allow for discussion of changes that will make them more successful. Since these discussions are confidential, the partnership is a very safe place to discuss how successful each new approach has been.

5. Commitment to be a mentor in the future. The one thing the Department is asking from mentee candidates is that in the future, you will make yourself available for mentoring other new Departmental leaders. The Department is starting this Program with the resource of volunteer departmental managers and retired managers. In the future, the Program will be transitioned as a sole responsibility of the Departmental Management Team. As part of this transition, it is likely that you will be called upon in the future to serve as a mentor for a less experienced supervisor or manager.



Role of the Mentor

The mentor will be a person who has significant experience as a State manager. The mentor will work with the mentee to establish a relationship to exchange experience, insight and wisdom. The types of assistance that mentors will provide are:

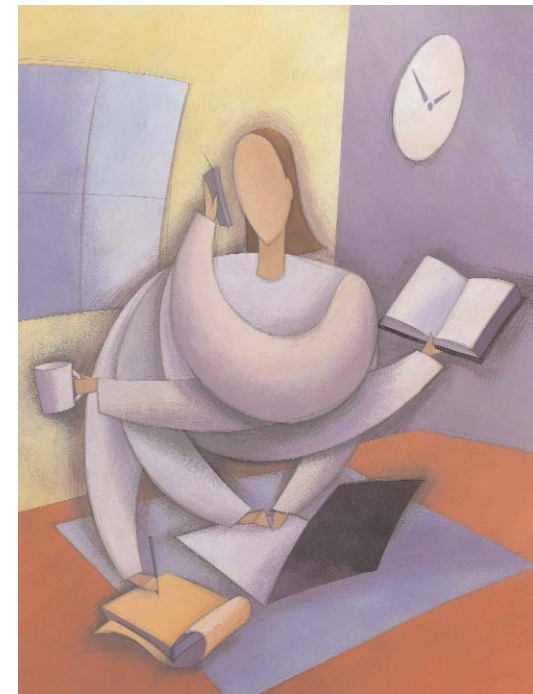
- ◆ Helping guide a mentee to resolve challenges and issues faced on the job
- ◆ Listening when the mentee has a problem
- ◆ Identifying mentee feelings and verifying them
- ◆ Effectively confronting negative intentions or behaviors
- ◆ Helping the mentee understand the failed or missed opportunities are also a learning experience
- ◆ Providing appropriate information when needed
- ◆ Validating appropriate management behavior
- ◆ Encouraging exploration of options

What happens if my partnership does not work out or my supervisor restricts my time for the Program?

The Program Coordinator will be following up with both mentors and mentees on a monthly basis to assure the partnership is progressing and is useful for the mentee. Through these contacts, the Program Coordinator will determine if intervention with management is necessary to assure time for mentee to participate in the Program or in the unlikely event that reassignment of partnerships is necessary. The Coordinator will also be gathering common issues that mentors are gathering during their partnership meetings that will be the focus of the larger meetings with all members of the Mentor Partnership Program.

The Mentor Partnership Program has been formally adopted as a Departmental priority. In adopting this as a priority Program, the CDSS Executive Staff decided the following:

- ◆ Managers will provide time for employees to participate in the Program
- ◆ The mentor-mentee discussions are confidential
- ◆ Support for the Program will be provided for by a Departmental Coordinator
- ◆ Stipends will be provided to those retired managers that participate in the Program



How do I apply for participation in the Program?

The following web address provides a link to a short questionnaire that is required to initiate your interest in the Program. This questionnaire is due by **July 31, 2007** to be considered for the first partnership class that will begin in **August 2007**. You should inform your supervisor that you have applied for participation in the Program. The first class will be a group of 30 mentees and we anticipate that interest will exceed that number. The participants for the first partnership group will be selected after July 31, 2007. You will be notified if you are in the first class by mid-August. Those who are not included in this initial selection will become part of the pool of potential candidates for the future. Evaluation of the first partnership session will be a major factor in the size and frequency of future partnership sessions. If you have any questions please forward them to:

e-mail address: mentors@dss.ca.gov

Link to mentee questionnaire: [applicant questionnaire](#)





STATE OF CALIFORNIA
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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